AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Original)   A picture encoding method that encodes picture information for each area by generating prediction pictures from picture information of frames that have been previously encoded, the method comprising:

a motion vector selection step that selects a motion vector from a plurality of motion vectors that have been stored in advance;

a prediction picture generation step that generates a prediction picture from a reference picture using the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step; and

a differential encoding step that encodes a difference between the picture information of the present area and the prediction picture.

2. (Original)   The picture encoding method as recited in claim 1, wherein the motion vector selection step selects the motion vector from the plurality of motion vectors in accordance with position information of areas within a screen.

3. (Currently Amended)   The picture encoding method as recited in claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising a motion vector designation encoding step that encodes information that designates the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step.

4. (Original)   A picture encoding method that encodes picture information

for each area by selecting a reference picture from picture information of a plurality of

frames that have been previously encoded and generating a prediction picture, the

method comprising:

a reference motion vector setting step that sets a correspondence relation

between a plurality of motion vectors that have been stored in advance and reference

picture designation information that designates a reference picture;

a reference picture selection step that selects the reference picture;

a reference picture designation encoding step that encodes the reference picture

designation information that designates the reference picture;

a motion vector selection step that selects a motion vector corresponding to the

reference picture designation information from the plurality of motion vectors that have

been stored in advance;

a prediction picture generation step that generates a prediction picture from the

reference picture using the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step;

and

a differential encoding step that encodes a difference between the picture

information of the present area and the prediction picture.

5. (Original)   The picture encoding method as recited in claim 1, claim 3,

or claim 4, further comprising:

a motion detection step that detects a motion vector using the picture information

of the present area and the reference picture;

a detected motion vector selection step that selects either of the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step or the motion vector obtained in the motion detection step;

a detected motion vector encoding step that, when the motion vector obtained in the motion detection step is selected by the detected motion vector selection step, encodes the motion vector; and

a detected motion vector designation encoding step that encodes information designating the motion vector selected by the detected motion vector selection step.

6. (Original)   The picture encoding method as recited in claim 1, claim 3, or claim 4, further comprising:

a motion detection step that detects a motion vector using the picture information of the present area and the reference picture; and

a differential motion vector encoding step that encodes the difference between the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step and the motion vector obtained in the motion detection step.

7. (Currently Amended)   The picture encoding method as recited in claim 5 or claim 6, further comprising:

a motion vector storage step that stores motion vectors;

a motion vector storage decision step that decides whether or not to store a motion vector; and

a motion vector storage designation encoding step that encodes information that designates whether or not to store a motion vector.

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8. (Currently Amended)   The picture encoding method as recited in ~~claim 5 or~~ claim

6, further comprising:

a motion vector storage step that stores motion vectors; and

a motion vector scaling step that changes the value of the motion vector using

motion vector scaling information.

9. (Original)   The picture encoding method as recited in claim 8, further

comprising a scaling encoding step that encodes the motion vector scaling information.

10. (Original)   A picture decoding method that decodes picture information for

each area by generating prediction pictures from picture information of frames that have

been previously decoded, the method comprising:

a motion vector selection step that selects a motion vector from a plurality of

motion vectors that have been stored in advance;

a prediction picture generation step that generates a prediction picture from a

reference picture using the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step;

and

a decoded picture generation step that generates a decoded picture by decoding

a difference between the picture information of the present area and the prediction

picture.

11. (Original)   The picture decoding method as recited in claim 10, wherein

the motion vector selection step selects the motion vector from the plurality of motion

vectors in accordance with position information of areas within a screen.

12. (Currently Amended)   The picture decoding method as recited in claim 10 or claim

11, further comprising a motion vector designation decoding step that decodes

information that designates the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection

step.

13. (Original)   A picture decoding method that decodes picture information

for each area by selecting a reference picture from picture information of a plurality of

frames that have been previously decoded and generating a prediction picture, the

method comprising:

a reference motion vector setting step that sets a correspondence relation

between a plurality of motion vectors that have been stored in advance and reference

picture designation information that designates a reference picture;

a reference picture designation decoding step that decodes the reference picture

designation information that designates the reference picture;

a reference picture selection step that selects the reference picture;

a motion vector selection step that selects a motion vector corresponding to the

reference picture designation information from the plurality of motion vectors that have

been stored in advance;

a prediction picture generation step that generates a prediction picture from the

reference picture using the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection step;

and

a decoded picture generation step that generates a decoded picture by decoding

a difference between the picture information of the present area and the prediction

picture.

14. (Original)   The picture decoding method as recited in claim 10, claim 12, or

claim 13, further comprising:

a detected motion vector designation decoding step that decodes information

that designates whether or not the motion vector is encoded; and

a detected motion vector decoding step that decodes the motion vector in the

case that the motion vector is encoded.

15. (Original)   The picture decoding method as recited in claim 10, claim 12, or

claim 13, further comprising:

a differential motion vector decoding step that decodes a differential motion

vector; and

a differential motion vector computation step that computes the motion vector

from the differential motion vector and the motion vector selected by the motion vector

selection step.

16. (Currently Amended)   The picture decoding method as recited in ~~claim 14 or~~ claim

15, further comprising:

a motion vector storage step that stores motion vectors; and

a motion vector storage designation decoding step that decodes information that

designates whether or not to store a motion vector.

17. (Currently Amended)   The picture decoding method as recited in ~~claim 14 or~~ claim

15, further comprising:

a motion vector storage step that stores motion vectors; and

a motion vector scaling step that changes the value of the motion vector using

motion vector scaling information.

18. (Original)   The picture decoding method as recited in claim 17, further

comprising a scaling decoding step that decodes the motion vector scaling information.

19. (Original)   A picture encoding apparatus that encodes picture

information for each area by generating prediction pictures from picture information of

frames that have been previously encoded, comprising:

a motion vector selection section that selects a motion vector from a plurality of

motion vectors that have been stored in advance;

a prediction picture generation section that generates a prediction picture from a

reference picture using the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection

section; and

a differential encoding section that encodes a difference between the picture

information of the present area and the prediction picture.

20. (Original)   A picture decoding apparatus that decodes picture information for each area by generating prediction pictures from picture information of frames that have been previously decoded, comprising:

a motion vector selection section that selects a motion vector from a plurality of motion vectors that have been stored in advance;

a prediction picture generation section that generates a prediction picture from a reference picture using the motion vector selected by the motion vector selection section; and

a decoded picture generation section that generates a decoded picture by decoding a difference between the picture information of the present area and the prediction picture.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)